PROPOSED CLAIM AMENDMENTS

U.S. SERIAL NO. 09/695,944

Amend claim 1-4 and 6 and 7 as follows:

1. (Amended) A control system for a hybrid vehicle with a combustion engine for outputting a driving force, an electric motor for generating [a force] power for assisting the output power from the engine, depending on driving conditions, a power storage unit for storing electric energy generated by the motor acting as a generator using the output power from the engine and electric energy regenerated by the motor when the vehicle decelerates, the control system comprising:

an output assist determination [device] means for determining, based on a determination threshold value as the standard, whether the power generated by the electric motor is to be used to assist the output power from the engine [by the motor,] depending on the driving conditions of the vehicle;

an air-fuel controller for changing the air-fuel ratio of the mixture, which is to be supplied to the engine, to a condition leaner or richer than the stoichiometric air-fuel ratio; and

a determination threshold value [changer] changing means for changing the determination threshold value, depending on whether the air-fuel ratio of the mixture is leaner or richer than the stoichiometric air-fuel ratio.

2. (Amended) [A] The control system for a hybrid vehicle according to claim 1, further comprising a determination threshold value change prohibiting [device] means for prohibiting the operation of the determination threshold value [changer] changing means when the air-fuel controller changes the air-fuel ratio of the mixture from the condition leaner than the stoichiometric air-fuel ratio to the condition richer than the stoichiometric air-fuel ratio.

3. (Amended) [A] The control system for a hybrid vehicle according to claim 2, further comprising a terminating [device] means for terminating the prohibition of the change of the determination threshold value while the determination threshold value change prohibiting [device] means prohibits the change of the determination threshold value, when the air-fuel ratio controller detects that the air-fuel ratio of the mixture is leaner than the stoichiometric air-fuel ratio, or when the prohibition of the change of the determination threshold value has been maintained for a specified time.

4. (Amended) A control system for a hybrid vehicle with a combustion engine for outputting a driving force, an electric motor for generating a [force] power for assisting the output power from the engine, depending on driving conditions, a power storage unit for storing electric energy generated by the motor acting as a generator using the output power from the engine and electric energy regenerated by the motor when the vehicle decelerates, the control system comprising:

an output assist determination [device] means for determining, based on a determination

threshold value as the standard, whether the power generated by the electric motor is to be used to assist the output power from the engine [by the motor], depending on the driving condition of the vehicle;

an air-fuel controller for changing the air-fuel ratio of the mixture, which is to be supplied to the engine, to a condition leaner or richer than the stoichiometric air-fuel ratio;

a determination threshold value [changer] changing means for changing the determination threshold value, depending on whether the air-fuel ratio of the mixture is leaner or richer than the stoichiometric air-fuel ratio;

an exhaust cleaner having an oxygen concentration measurement device, provided in an exhaust system of the engine, for measuring oxygen concentration in exhaust gas, and a nitrogen oxide reduction device for absorbing nitrogen oxide in the exhaust gas when the oxygen concentration in the exhaust gas is high and for reducing the absorbed nitrogen oxide when the oxygen concentration in the exhaust gas is low;

a reduction [device] means for setting the air-fuel ratio of the mixture to the condition richer than the stoichiometric air-fuel ratio of the mixture to the condition richer than the stoichiometric air-fuel ratio so as to reduce the oxygen concentration in the exhaust gas, when the air-fuel ratio of the mixture, which is to be supplied to the engine, is leaner than the stoichiometric air-fuel ratio; and

a determination threshold value change prohibiting [device] means for prohibiting the operation of the determination threshold value [changer] changing means when the reduction [device] means changes the air-fuel ratio of the mixture from the condition leaner than the

stoichiometric air-fuel ratio to the condition richer than the stoichiometric air-fuel ratio.

6. (Amended) A control system for a hybrid vehicle according to claim 4, further comprising a terminating [device] means for terminating the prohibition of the change of the determination threshold value while the determination threshold value change prohibiting [device] means is prohibiting the change of the determination threshold value, when the air-fuel ratio controller detects that the air-fuel ratio of the mixture is leaner than the stoichiometric air-fuel ratio, or when the probation of the change of the determination threshold value is maintained for a specified time.

7. (Amended) A control system for a hybrid vehicle according to claim 5, further comprising a terminating [device] means for terminating the prohibition of the change of the determination threshold value while the determination threshold value change prohibiting [device] means prohibits the change of the determination threshold value, when the air-fuel ratio controller detects that the air-fuel ratio of the mixture is leaner than the stoichiometric air-fuel ratio, or when the prohibition of the change of the determination threshold value has been maintained for a specified time.

Add the following new claims 14 and 15:

14. (Added) The control system as recited in claim 1,

US 096803450JP1

Creation date: 27-02-2003
Indexing Officer: PRT2827 - GAU2827 PRINTER
Team: GAU2827PrtWorkingFolder
Dossier: 09680345

Legal Date: 21-02-2003

No.	Doccode	Number of pages
1	AP/A	1
2	XT/	1

Total number of pages: 2

Remarks:

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